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DE RUEHPU #0578 0821813
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P 231813Z MAR 07
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5686
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1480
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1303
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0764
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1179

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 000578

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR
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SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/05/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [HA](#) [XA](#)
SUBJECT: OAS ''FRIENDS GROUP'' MEETS RESISTANCE

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 433

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Thomas C. Tighe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Organization of American States (OAS) Special Representative, Denneth Modeste, said that the OAS Assistant Secretary General, Albert Ramdin, proposed to re-establish a

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Group of Friends during his visit to Haiti on March 19. (Note: The OAS convened the Group of Friends in Port-au-Prince before the UN mandate of 2004. Once the UN arrived, the OAS disbanded the Group of Friends and joined the Core Group. End note.) Adamant that this would duplicate and even compete with the Core Group, Modeste refused to host the meeting with the international community at the OAS. Ramdin instead asked the Canadian Embassy to host the meeting. Post did not attend the meeting, and the only other OAS ambassadors in attendance were Brazil and Canada. Overall, according to a political officer at the Canadian Embassy, the participants supported greater coordination among Haiti's donors. However, they contested Ramdin's suggestion that the Core Group was a technical group, and disagreed with Ramdin that Haiti's partners needed another political forum, arguing that this is the role of the Core Group.

¶2. (SBU) Modeste confirmed that he is leaving at the end of March, and said that the special mission will be down-graded to a national office. The OAS has not named a national director, and former UN SRSG Juan Gabriel Valdes is no longer a possibility. Modeste said that Valdes' visit here was as part of a OAS technical mission and that he would most likely not return under OAS auspices, contrary to what he had told Polcouns (reftel).

¶3. (C) Comment: As discussed in reftel, Modeste's low opinion of Ramdin's efforts reflects Modeste's low opinion of Ramdin himself. Taking that into account, we agree with Modeste that a broader OAS role in political issues runs the risk of duplicating the efforts of MINUSTAH and the Core Group, though Ramdin has stated he does not wish to duplicate other donor efforts. There is some support within the Core Group for Ramdin and for a more active role for the OAS.

Suggested areas for OAS involvement are tourism, the judicial sector and human rights, as well as support to the electoral commission.

TIGHE